



This picture may have come from the efforts of a photo-shop enthusiast, but I would prefer to think it is a natural occurrence. Let's just presume it is a natural one, because if it did- how wonderful that would be!

God declaring in the sky above, his love, again- how wonderful! But, as I think about it a troubling question comes to mind: Do I proclaim my love to others; not just my friends or family, but to everyone? *Everyone*, really **EVERYONE?**

Jesus said...

Matthew 5 (World English Bible)

43 "You have heard that it was said, 'You shall love your neighbor, and hate your enemy.'

44 **But I tell you, love your enemies, bless those who curse you, do good to those who hate you, and pray for those who mistreat you and persecute you,**

45 **that you may be children of your Father who is in heaven. For he makes his sun to rise on the evil and the good, and sends rain on the just and the unjust.**

46 **For if you love those who love you, what reward do you have? Don't even the tax collectors do the same?**

47 **If you only greet your friends, what more do you do than others? Don't even the tax collectors do the same?**

48 **Therefore you shall be perfect, just as your Father in heaven is perfect.**

Jesus gives the answer that is to be our guide- love your enemies! This may sound hard, but is a command of God. He concludes the concept- be perfect as God is perfect. In other words... love as God would love. How does God love? Everyone of course; he wants the very best for everyone- AND SO SHOULD WE!

In another passage of Scripture, Jesus links the practicality of this concept with eternal life. Consider the passage found in Luke 10.

Luke 10 (WEB)

25 Behold, a certain lawyer stood up and tested him, saying, "Teacher, what shall I do to inherit eternal life?"

26 He said to him, "**What is written in the law? How do you read it?**"

27 He answered, "You shall love the Lord your God with all your heart, with all your soul, with all your strength, and with all your mind; and your neighbor as yourself."

29 But he, desiring to justify himself, asked Jesus, "Who is my neighbor?"

30 Jesus answered, "A certain man was going down from Jerusalem to Jericho, and he fell among robbers, who both stripped him and beat him, and departed, leaving him half dead.

31 By chance a certain priest was going down that way. When he saw him, he passed by on the other side.

32 In the same way a Levite also, when he came to the place, and saw him, passed by on the other side.

33 But a certain Samaritan, as he traveled, came where he was. When he saw him, he was moved with compassion,

34 came to him, and bound up his wounds, pouring on oil and wine. He set him on his own animal, and brought him to an inn, and took care of him.

35 On the next day, when he departed, he took out two denarii, and gave them to the host, and said to him, 'Take care of him. Whatever you spend beyond that, I will repay you when I return.'

36 Now which of these three do you think seemed to be a neighbor to him who fell among the robbers?"

37 He said, "He who showed mercy on him." Then Jesus said to him, **"Go and do likewise."**

The Jews hated the Samaritans, but Jesus gives an example of a Samaritan showing love for a stranger. Shouldn't we be willing to do the same? The Apostle Paul taught the supremacy of love as well, consider...

Rom 13 (WEB)

8 Owe no one anything, except to love one another; for he who loves his neighbor has fulfilled the law.

9 For the commandments, "You shall not commit adultery," "You shall not murder," "You shall not steal," "You shall not give false testimony," "You shall not covet," and whatever other commandments there are, are all summed up in this saying, namely, "You shall love your neighbor as yourself."

10 Love doesn't harm a neighbor. Love therefore is the fulfillment of the law.

Gal 5 (WEB)

For the whole law is fulfilled in one word, in this: "You shall love your neighbor as yourself."

LOVE IS THE COMPLETE FULFILLMENT OF THE LAW! In all these examples the word for love is agape, or, the highest love, the love of God. We don't have to even like someone to wish the best for them or to do something for them; we, as Christians are to imitate God's character and do what he would do if HE were in our place – right here, right now.

See that image of a heart in the heaven? It is a message from God that he loves us! It is up to us to be what we say we are and actually love as God loves. In other words, Christian, practice what you preach!

Note to self: Gary- This means you as well. Do it!